

Eliminating Syphilis

Los Angeles County, California

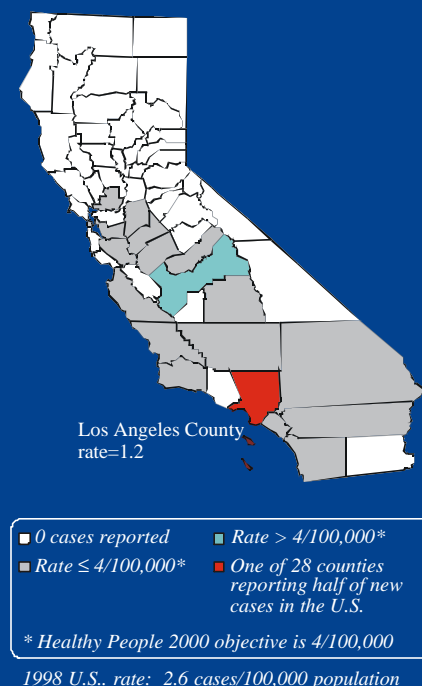
Why is Syphilis Elimination in the U.S. within our reach now?

- Syphilis is a preventable and curable sexually transmitted disease (STD).
- Infectious syphilis is at the lowest rate ever reported: 2.6 cases/100,000 population (6,993 total cases).
- Syphilis is now very concentrated; half of all new cases in 1998 were reported from only 28 counties, which represent less than 1% of all U.S. counties.
- Other industrialized countries have already eliminated syphilis.

Why is it Important to Eliminate Syphilis in Los Angeles County?

- **In 1998 Los Angeles County ranked 10th in the nation** in new cases of infectious syphilis (108 cases).
- **To reduce one of the most glaring racial disparities in health**
 - S 45% of cases are among African Americans (79% of cases nationally) and 32% are among Hispanics.
 - S The infectious syphilis rate in Los Angeles County for African Americans is 11 times greater and the rate for Hispanics is 2 times greater than the rate for white Americans.
- **To decrease spread of HIV infection**
 - S Syphilis increases HIV transmission at least 2-to-5 fold.
- **To improve infant health**
 - S Syphilis can be transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy causing stillbirths or congenital infection, some of which may result in persistent health problems.
 - S In 1998, 68 cases of congenital syphilis were reported from Los Angeles County for a rate of 40.2 cases/100,000 births, 2 times higher than the national rate of 20.6 cases/100,000 births.

Infectious Syphilis — California, 1998



Los Angeles County Responds

- Syphilis elimination efforts in Los Angeles include: 1) a rapid and enhanced response to all possible outbreaks, 2) intensified syphilis case management, 3) active surveillance, 4) intensified syphilis screening of persons at higher risk for acquiring syphilis, 5) a community involvement and outreach initiative, and 6) health provider training.
- The Los Angeles County Public Health Programs & Services Division publishes "The Public Health Letter," which reaches over 26,000 health professionals with periodic updates about the county's syphilis elimination efforts.

For more information contact:

A. Michael Lawrence, MPA
County of Los Angeles Preventive Health Services
(213)744-3085
(213)749-9606 (fax)

For media inquiries contact:

National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office of Communications
(404) 639-8895

<http://www.cdc.gov/StopSyphilis/>



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention

